



Public Notice

Spruce bark beetle mitigation efforts to begin in October

The Seward Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest will initiate spruce bark beetle mitigation efforts across five Forest Service campgrounds beginning in October 2021.

The campgrounds affected include Cooper Creek, Crescent Creek, Quartz Creek, Russian River and Tenderfoot. To ensure safety of the public and work crews, campgrounds will be closed while work is being performed. Information on closures will be posted on the Chugach National Forest website and at each campground.

Forest Service employees will be working with partners, contractors, and the public to employ mitigation measures in these high use areas to reduce risk to both personnel and the public. Mitigation measures in these areas will vary based on the conditions at each site. Work will largely be focused on removing dead and dying trees to reduce the risk of falling hazards and wildfire. Depending on the severity of the beetle infestation, crews may remove entire stands of infected trees, thin infected areas of dense stands or apply preventative agents to protect healthy trees from infestation. -To assist in the recovery of these sites and to promote the long-term health of the treated areas, crews may initiate reforestation efforts.

Spruce beetle infestation is the most significant cause of death for mature spruce trees in Alaska and is currently responsible for approximately 900,000 acres of dead and dying spruce in the southcentral portion of the state. -Spruce beetles are a naturally occurring pest that given the right environmental conditions can kill trees across a wide geographical area. Trees that have succumbed to beetle infestation can begin falling within one to three years, creating hazards for both people and infrastructure nearby. The buildup of these fallen trees on the ground can also affect wildfire behavior.

Community members who have any questions about the upcoming spruce beetle mitigation efforts are encouraged to contact Forester, Thomas Roland at the Seward Ranger District Office at 907-288-7706 or District Ranger, Francisco Sanchez at 907-288-7730. Once implementation begins, updates will be found at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/chugach/>.